

I am most concerned about the Sinclair Broadcast Group's recent actions. That any broadcasting company would even consider televising a "documentary" without giving any context or equal time to a competing viewpoint illustrates perfectly the dangers to free thought, free speech caused by rampant media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge. I disagree completely that the any broadcaster should use the public airwaves free of charge, since they can well afford to pay something in return. However, since they are given use of the airwaves free of charge, then they ARE theoretically obligated by law to serve the public interest. However, as the current situation with Sinclair shows, the broadcasters can have it both ways: they are given the airwaves free (which increases their profits tremendously) AND they can put what they want to on those airwaves. Is this fair? Is this good for our democracy? No, so why in the heck is it legal?

When large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for their bottom line, and it appears from Sinclair's actions, more of ideological viewpoints hiding behind the mask of an "impartial" accounting of the facts. At least with cable channels that pay for their licenses, you can probably figure out with a little research where that ideological viewpoint is coming from. That is much harder to do when the broadcaster is supposed to be providing programming that is in the public interest.

Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.